

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1-39. Cancelled

40. (New) An optical fiber connector for forming a mechanical splice between first and second bare optical fibers stripped of coatings, the connector comprising a connector body that is divided into at least two parts along at least part of a length thereof, arranged such that the optical fibers may be clamped between the parts and that comprises at least two independently openable main clamping sections dimensioned to clamp directly onto the bare fiber of the first and second optical fibers, wherein the connector body includes at least one additional independently openable clamping section dimensioned to clamp onto a coated portion of one of the optical fibers, and the clamping sections are arranged such that the first optical fiber may be clamped by a first of the main clamping sections independently of the second optical fiber, enabling the clamping of the first fiber against rotational and axial movement with respect to the connector body to remain substantially undisturbed by subsequent clamping or unclamping of the second fiber.

41. (New) A connector according to claim 40, comprising three independently openable main clamping sections.

42. (New) A connector according to claim 41, in which a first of the three main clamping sections is arranged to clamp onto the first fiber only, a second of the three main clamping sections is arranged to clamp onto the second fiber only, and a third of the three main clamping sections is arranged to clamp onto both of the first and second fibers.

43. (New) A connector according to claim 40, in which one or both of the connector body parts includes a groove such that when the parts are assembled together the groove(s) form a channel extending through the body arranged to accommodate the optical fibers.
44. (New) A connector according to claim 43, in which the main clamping sections and the channel of the connector body are configured to clamp the bare fiber of the first and second optical fibers in the channel.
45. (New) A connector according to claim 40, comprising at least two said additional independently openable clamping sections dimensioned to clamp onto coated portions of the optical fibers.
46. (New) A connector according to claim 40, comprising at least five clamping sections.
47. (New) A connector according to claim 43, in which the channel has a first region, and a second region of greater diameter than the first region at each end of the first region.
48. (New) A connector according to claim 47, in which the channel has a third region of greater diameter than the second region at the end of each second region remote from the first region.
49. (New) A connector according to claim 48, wherein at least the second and/or third regions of the channel are substantially circular in cross-section.
50. (New) A connector according to claim 48, in which the third regions of the channel are dimensioned to accommodate buffer coatings of the optical fibers in a tight clamping fit.
51. (New) A connector according to claim 47, in which the first region of the channel is dimensioned to accommodate bare optical fibers stripped of coatings in a tight clamping fit.

52. (New) A connector according to claim 47, in which the second regions of the channel are dimensioned to accommodate primary coatings of the optical fibers in a tight clamping fit.

53. (New) A connector according to claim 40, further comprising a resilient clamp member arranged to retain the parts of the connector body together such that the optical fibers are clamped between the parts.

54. (New) A connector according to claim 40, having at least one clamping section arranged to clamp a fixing member that is fixed to a respective optical fiber such that the fixing member is secured in the connector body when the fibers are spliced.

55. (New) A connector according to claim 54, arranged to clamp the or each fixing member so as to retain a desired rotational orientation and axial position of its respective fiber in the connector.

56. (New) A connector according to claim 43, further comprising at least one plug arranged to close an end of the channel when an optical fiber is not installed in that end of the channel.

57. (New) A connector according to claim 43, in which the assembled connector body comprises a plurality of the said channels arranged to accommodate the plurality of first and second optical fibers.

58. (New) A connector according to claim 43, including alignment means for aligning the first and second optical fibers with each other.

59. (New) A connector according to claim 58, in which the alignment means comprises an alignment member in which the first and second optical fibers may be received and aligned.

60. (New) A connector according to claim 59, in which the alignment member comprises a tube, or at least one plate, each tube or plate having an aperture therein for a respective one of the first and second fibers.

61. (New) A connector according to claim 60, in which the or each tube or plate includes a lens to assist in coupling light between the first and second optical fibers.